

## Guidance Notes

### The Application Form

Please complete the application form in black type/ink and return by no later than the closing date referred to in the advert. Please ensure that any additional sheets include your full name and details of the post you are applying for (reference number and job title).

CVs will not be accepted as a substitute for this application form, unless specifically stated in the advert.

Please sign the declaration in Section 1 of the application form, if you are sending by email please make sure a signed hard copy is also sent to us in the post. The application form plays a key part in our recruitment and selection process and we use the information you give us to decide whether or not to shortlist you for an interview. Please ensure that you give **specific examples**, which demonstrate how you meet the essential criteria/competencies for the post for which you are applying.

### Guaranteed Interview Scheme (GIS)

The Highways Agency is committed to the employment and career development of people with disabilities. To demonstrate our commitment we display the Disability Symbol, which is awarded by the Employment Service. As a symbol holder, we guarantee an interview to anyone with a disability (as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, and the Disability Bill 2005) who meets the residency and nationality criteria, the specified minimum levels of qualifications and demonstrates a minimum standard in the competency section. We will not discriminate against candidates who require reasonable adjustments in connection with a disability.

### About your past employment and career history

Please give details of all full-time and part-time work, not including casual work. We would suggest 8-10 years as a reasonable history starting with your most recent employer.

### Nationality Eligibility Requirements

Posts are open to EC nationals, British Protected persons, and nationals of states in the European Economic Area, including Switzerland and certain members of their families. Commonwealth citizens must be free from any restrictions to reside and take up employment in the UK.

### Conflicts of Interests

You should declare any interests you any have that might cause questions to be raised about your attitude to the business or the Highways Agency. You are required to declare any relevant business interests, other current employments or services, share holdings, positions of authority, retainers, consultancy arrangements or other

connections with commercial, public or voluntary bodies, both for yourself and for your spouse/partner. The successful candidate will be required to give up any conflicting interests. Some safety critical jobs in Traffic Operations may be incompatible with other employment, so please read all the recruitment documentation carefully. For further advice contact the named individual/team mentioned in the advertisement.

### Diversity Monitoring Form

The Highways Agency is an equal opportunities employer. We welcome applications from all sectors of the community, and all backgrounds, as we value diversity and aspire to reflect this in our workforce. We recruit on the basis of ability, and make no distinction between people on the grounds of their race, sex, disability, ethnic or national origin, age, part-time status, religion, marital status or sexual orientation.

We want to find out if this policy is working and to take steps to ensure further progress is made in achieving equal opportunities. To do this we need to know some details about the people who apply to join us. **We therefore ask you to complete the Diversity Monitoring form enclosed with the application pack.**

The information you give us is confidential and is not seen by any person who is connected with the selection process. If you become an employee of the HA the information will be recorded for the purposes of diversity monitoring within the Agency. Please enter your name on the form. This enables us to track the progress of applicants through the recruitment process, and help us ensure there is no discrimination at any stage of the process.

Please send the Diversity Monitoring form with your application form to the address in the covering letter.

### About your skills and abilities for the job

This important section is designed to let you tell us something about yourself, your experiences, job knowledge, relevant qualifications, skills and abilities. We will assess all the information you give us in the application form and we will take up references for all external candidates, including existing civil servants.

### Notes for completion

Against each competency/essential requirement, please give examples of a past experience that best illustrates the qualities we are looking for. When you complete the areas it is important that you:

- If qualifications/experience are part of the essential criteria, tell us about how you match the requirements.
- Give one recent example for each competency/essential requirement.
- Be precise about what you did and the part you played in the activities you describe.
- Describe the outcome or result of your actions.
- Limit the number of words you write to a maximum of **200 words** per competency/essential requirement and record the word count after each. In assessing your achievement record we will disregard words in excess of 200.

A useful guide might be **S.T.A.R.**:

**S**pecific – give a specific example.

**T**ask - briefly describe the task/objective etc.

**A**ction – tell us what action you took.

**R**esults – describe what results were achieved.

The examples you give can be taken from any aspect of your life, for example: your work, your job seeking experiences, your family or home responsibilities, your school or college work, your leisure activities or voluntary work. Recent work examples tend to be the strongest indicator of your abilities, so we would recommend that you use these if possible.

When completing, continue on a separate sheet if necessary. Please put your full name and job reference number on any additional sheets.

This is an **unsuitable** example:

Working with people: Understands how own objectives fit into team objectives and builds effective working relationships with members of own/other teams.

*“I fully understand my own objectives and how these fit into the overall team objectives. I take time to understand the other team member’s workloads and help wherever I can.*

*I have always regarded effective working relationships to be very important to my own work, the teams and ultimately the business. I have the ability to communicate well at all levels and this certainly facilitates team working.*

*Recently I was asked to shadow a manager in another business area. I took time beforehand to plan my visit thoroughly. Whilst carrying out this shadowing exercise, I was able to ask a number of key questions that were important to my team.”*

This example is unsuitable for a number of reasons. Firstly although the candidate states that they are effective in understanding their own objectives and those of the team, there is no evidence to support these statements. An attempt has been made to provide an example of building effective working relationships, however there is not enough detail of why and how the candidate gathered information prior to the visit. In addition, there is no information about the outcome. It would have been useful to understand what benefit this exercise was to themselves and also their team.

## Data Protection

In accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998, the Highways Agency (HA) will use the information given for the purposes of recruitment and selection. If you become an employee of HA, the information will be used for the purpose of personnel administration, including pay and pensions, as set out in the HA Staff Handbook. It will only be disclosed outside the HA to parties who are under contract to process data in these areas.

**If you need this, or any of the attached forms in large print or Braille please contact the Recruitment Officer as stated in the advert.**